(c) The resultant growth of telephone connections per annum on an average over the 8th Five Year Plan period is likely to be more than 25 percent with respect to the number of telephones at the begining of the Plan.

Illegal telephone connections

4494. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news items captioned "MTNL taken for a ride by captains", which appeared to the Business Standard of the 21st January, 1995;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, including the names of persons/companies involved in the illegal connections with non-metered lines;

(c) whether any assessment has been made about the loss suffered by MTNL on account of this incident and if so, the details thereof and whether the said amount has been recovered from the persons/company concerned if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any enquiry has been conducted to ascertain the involvement of officials of MTNL and if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) what action Government have taken so far against those persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The names of companies/individuals involved in the illegal connection with non-metered lines are as under:—

(i) M/s. Usha (India) Ltd.

(ii) Shri Girish Sarin

(iii) M/s. Appollo Tyres

(iv) Shri Bhupender Kumar

(v) Smt. Vibha Bhatia

(c) The loss has been estimated at Rs. 70.7 lakhs approximately, out of which Rs. 29.2 lakhs approx; have been realised due to sustained efforts of MTNL. Efforts are being made to realise the balance amount also.

(d) and (e) Assistance of CBI was sought to pinpoint the officials of MTNL involved. However, so far it has not been possible to identify the involved officials.

Introduction of EPABX in Apartments and Group Housing Societies

4495. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the MTNL, New Delhi has recently announced to introduce new EPABX system on high rise apartments and group housing societies;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed system;

(c) whether MTNL propose to assign the task to the private entrepreneurs; and

(d) if so, to what extent it is going to clear the mounting wating lists for new telephone connections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Salient features of the Scheme are as under:

(1) Private parties will be authorised under a licence to install, maintain and operate Direct indialling Group EPABXs of sizes 128 to 1024P in multistoreyed buildings and Group Housing Societies.

(2) Junction lines to such EPABXs will be sanctioned on out of turn priority basis under NOYT general category. These junction lines will be charged 20 per cent additional rent.

(3) Extensions of these EPABXs can be provided to intending subscri-